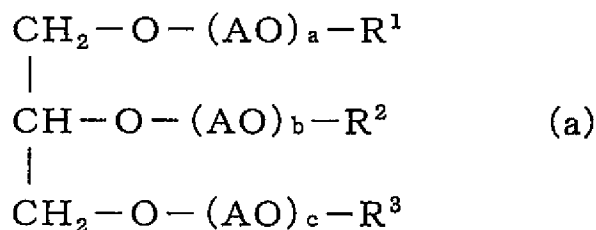


AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Cancelled)

2. (Currently Amended) The ~~process deinking agent~~ according to claim 11 ~~Claim 1~~, in which the compound is represented by the following general formula (a), its hydroxyl value (OHV), saponification value (SV) and acid value (AV) satisfying the following: $\text{OHV}/(\text{SV} - \text{AV} + \text{OHV})$ ranges from 0 to 0.3,



wherein R1 to R3 are each independently a hydrogen atom, or an acyl group having 1 to 24 carbon atoms provided that at least one of R1 to R3 is an acyl group having 8 to 24 carbon atoms, A is an alkylene group having 2 to 4 carbon atoms, A may be the groups wherein the numbers of their carbon atoms are different, and $a+b+c$ is a numerical number of from 45 to 1000.

3. (Currently Amended) The ~~process deinking agent~~ according to Claim 2, in which the hydroxyl value (OHV) of a fraction having a weight average molecular weight of 2000 or more, the saponification value (SV) thereof and the acid value (AV) thereof satisfying the following: $\text{OHV}/(\text{SV} - \text{AV} + \text{OHV})$ ranges from 0 to 0.3.

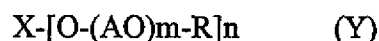
4. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~process deinking agent~~ according to claim 2, wherein the compound represented by the general formula (a) is an esterified reactant of a reaction product obtained by adding an alkylene oxide to glycerin, and a carboxylic acid.

5-8. **(Cancelled)**

9. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~process deinking agent~~ of claim 11 ~~claim 1~~, wherein the esterification is carried out ~~without~~ in the absence of a fat or oil.

10. **(Currently Amended)** The ~~process deinking agent~~ of claim 11 ~~claim 1~~, wherein the polyhydric alcohol is a trihydric alcohol ~~having 3 to 10 valences~~.

11. **(New)** A process for preparing a deinking agent, comprising the step of:
esterifying an alkylene oxide adduct to a polyhydric alcohol having 3-10 valences with a carboxylic acid, at a temperature of 100 °C to 260 °C; to yield a compound represented by the general formula (Y) shown below and having a value of $\text{OHV}/(\text{SV} - \text{AV} + \text{OHV})$ in the range of from 0 to 0.5, wherein OHV represents the hydroxyl value, SV represents the saponification value, and AV represents the acid value;



wherein R is each independently a hydrogen atom or an acyl group having 1 to 24 carbon atoms, provided that at least one of plural R is an acyl group having 8 to 24 carbon atoms, A is an alkylene group having 2 to 4 carbon atoms, A may be the groups wherein the numbers of their

carbon atoms are different, and $m \times n$ is a numerical number of from 45 to 1000, X is a polyhydric alcohol group, n is a number of 3 to 10 being equivalent the valence of X.